

The Supreme Principle of Goodness

The Supreme Principle of Goodness (Shiva Tattva)

QUESTION: I would like to know more about the Yogic Principle of Goodness.

ANSWER: The Supreme Principle of Yoga is **Shiva**. The Sanskrit word "Shiva" means "Good". Therefore, the Highest Truth of Yoga is Goodness.

Why Goodness?

It is generally accepted that breathing is a good thing, eating is good, drinking is good, hearing is good, seeing is good, speaking is good, moving, working or playing is good. Waking is good and sleeping is good. It is good that the Sun rises and it is good that the Sun sets. It is good that the Moon and the Stars shine in the Sky. It is good that the Wind blows and the Rain falls upon Earth. All basic things in life are good. It follows that life is fundamentally good. And if life is fundamentally good then the Intelligence and Power who created life must also be Good. Therefore, God, Who is the Creator, Protector, Supporter and Ground of all things, is called "**Good**" ("**Shiva**"). God is the Supreme Principle of Goodness or **Shiva Tattva**. For this reason, the Holy Scriptures of India declare that **Shiva** or **Goodness** is the **Highest Truth and Yoga is the Path that leads to It**.

What about Evil?

Evil is the opposite of good. Truth, Wisdom, Justice, Peace, Compassion, Beauty, Friendship, Harmony, Unity, Happiness and Love – are good. Untruth, Ignorance, Injustice, Violence, Cruelty, Ugliness, Enmity, Disharmony, Disunity, Unhappiness and Hatred – are evil. Evil is a negative force that arises in opposition to what is Good.

Did God create Evil?

No. Another meaning of the Name "Shiva" is "Pure". **God is Pure Goodness**. That which is Pure and Good cannot create that which is Impure and Bad. However, God does create imperfect beings and such beings are capable of performing actions that may be qualified as evil. If a Soul lives out of Unity with God, or Goodness, then he makes himself vulnerable to negative forces which take over and act through the intermediary of that Soul. Conversely, if a Soul lives in Unity with God then he opens himself to Goodness which then, through the intermediary of that Soul, creates things that are good. Thus Good and Evil are based on Unity or Disunity with the **Supreme Goodness (Parama Shiva)**.

What about Destruction?

If Shiva is Pure Goodness, why is He sometimes called the "God of Destruction"? The fact is that the Western expression "God of Destruction" is actually misleading due to its negative connotations. In the Eastern tradition, Shiva is never called "God of Destruction" but "Destroyer of Evil", "Destroyer of Sins", etc., which is a totally different thing. The answer, therefore, depends on what is meant by "Destruction". If "Destruction" is taken to mean the malicious and unjustified breaking, demolition or annihilation of things, then this is not what Shiva stands for.

The Supreme Principle of Goodness

If, on the other hand, "Destruction" is understood as the annihilation of Evil, then this is an appropriate description of Shiva.

As the Supreme Principle of Goodness, Shiva naturally represents the opposite of Evil which brings about the destruction of the latter. For this reason, Shiva is known by such titles as **Destroyer of Evil (Mahishasura-Mardin)**, **Conqueror of Death (Yama- Antaka)**, etc.

Shiva is the "Destroyer" or, rather, "De-constructor" in another sense also. It is essential to understand that God exists independently of Creation. Creation is not a permanent part of God but only a temporary event or construct which is eventually dissolved in the Eternal and Changeless Bliss and Intelligence of God, just as a thought arises and then dissolves back in a man's mind or a wave rises and then subsides in the ocean. The Power whereby this Dissolution, Deconstruction or "Destruction" takes place belongs as much to the Supreme Being as the Power whereby Creation is constructed or brought into being.

The Divine Power that brings about Creation is traditionally called "Brahmaa" or "That which makes grow". The Power that preserves the World is known as "Vishnu" or "That which pervades and supports everything". Finally, the Power that dissolves the Universe back into God's Infinite Ocean of Consciousness is called "Shiva". "Shiva" also means "Peaceful" and is suggestive of the Reality in which all things come to rest.

In reality, of course, the World is not destroyed but merely re-absorbed into God's Infinite Consciousness in the same way as a thought returns to the thought-free intelligence, or a wave returns to the motionless sea, from which it arose. For this reason, Shiva is called **"Sarva-Samhaara-Kartaa"**, that is, "Dissolver (or Re-absorber) of all things". In consequence, the title of "Dissolver" or "Re-absorber" represents a more accurate description of God's Universal Function than the often-misinterpreted, negative title of "Destroyer".

Thus what remains after the dissolution or de-construction of Creation is **Shiva**, the Eternal Principle of Goodness Himself. Shiva exists both before and after Creation and He is also the Power that brings an end to Creation and brings everything back to its original state of rest within the **Eternal Good (Sadaa-Shiva)**.

What becomes evident is that what is sometimes erroneously called "Destruction" in the negative sense of the word, actually constitutes a pure expression of Goodness: as the World contains both Good and Evil, its dissolution at the end of time results in the re-establishment of **Absolute Goodness (Parama Shiva)** which must be admitted to be a good thing.

In the context of Spiritual life, God acts as **Destroyer of Ignorance** and **Destroyer of Obstacles**. Thus, in the final analysis, as everything that comes from God is Good, even Destruction, when effectuated by God, is a good thing. Although God may be referred to by the titles of "Brahmaa" or "Vishnu" according to His specific Powers, the Yoga tradition prefers the Name **"Shiva"** because it emphasises God's role as Destroyer or Remover of ignorance and obstacles on the Spiritual Path.

Also, "Shiva" designates "God as He is in Himself", that is, the Supreme Goodness (Parama Shiva) in Itself, existing independently of man, World and other things. If we called God by the name of Brahmaa (Creator) or Vishnu (Preserver) this would suggest a specific and temporary function of God, namely, Creation or Preservation. Shiva, on the other hand, designates the **Supreme Goodness** which is God's very own Changeless and Eternal Nature.

The Supreme Principle of Goodness

Where does suffering come from?

Suffering is a form of Unhappiness which arises from opposition to Goodness and Happiness. Goodness and Happiness constitute the Natural State of the Supreme Being (Parama Shiva). As the Supreme Being creates, manifests or emanates the World out of Himself, the World is naturally happy and good. The very fabric of Creation is happy and good.

The forces that enable all creatures in the Universe to exist in Unity with the Principle of Goodness are called **Dharma** or **the Supreme Eternal Law of Heaven**. Those that oppose it are called **Adharma**.

Any moving or unmoving thing that abides in Unity with Dharma, with the Law of God, experiences Happiness as a result. Conversely, whatever exists in dis-Unity with Dharma experiences suffering.

Why is Suffering necessary? Because it prevents those who have transgressed the Principles of Divine Law (Dharma) from further transgression. Suffering serves several purposes: (1) to punish the transgressor, (2) to warn him against further transgression and (3) to ultimately prevent him from committing any more transgressions. Even the most hardened transgressor can only take a certain amount of suffering after which he will come to his senses and turn to the Right Path. Suffering, therefore, is an integral defence-mechanism built into Universal Order to prevent its collapse.

If there were no Suffering, there would be nothing there to prevent Evil (Adharma) from taking over and finally challenging the Immutable Law of Heaven and the Authority of its Creator, the Supreme Principle of Goodness (Parama Shiva). This would be inconceivable and absurd.

Another important function of suffering is to purify, perfect and elevate the transgressing Soul. Thus although, in the short term, suffering may be correctly interpreted as the "Wrath of God", in the long term it must be understood to be expressive of God's Love for the Soul, leading as it does to the latter's purification, perfection and Spiritual elevation, and his final readmission to Shiva's Blissful World of Universal Unity.

What is Hell?

Hell is an extreme form of suffering. Even on Earth, when a person is experiencing much suffering, it is said that "he is going through Hell". Humans can experience suffering individually or collectively. In some cases, collective suffering happens on Earth. However, as many more Souls live on other planes of existence, it is usually necessary to isolate collective suffering from the rest of Earth-residing humanity and concentrate it on other planes. (This constitutes a protective measure preventing humanity from being overwhelmed and finding it difficult to regain its balance.) The location in time of space of such a concentration of Collective Suffering, is called Hell, properly speaking.

God created Heaven and Earth. However, knowing that some Souls would stray from the Right Path (Sat Dharma) God also created Hell as a place of Ignorance and Darkness where erring Souls are sent for punishment and correction, and where they are held so as not to contaminate the righteous, until all errors have been removed from the sinners' heart.

Thus Heaven is based on Knowledge, Hell is based on Ignorance and Earth which is situated between the two, is based on a combination of Knowledge and Ignorance.

The Supreme Principle of Goodness

Those who live on Earth must choose between Knowledge and Ignorance. If they choose Knowledge, they are elevated to the Heavenly Spheres where they enjoy a life of bliss. If they choose Ignorance, they sink into the Nether Regions of existence where they live a life of pain.

It is imperative to understand that God is the Supreme Principle of Goodness, Justice and Compassion. He instructs man as to what is right and what is wrong and then lets him decide. On the basis of man's decision, God then rewards or punishes man exactly according to his deeds, in an absolutely fair, just and impartial manner. While God is the Supreme Lawmaker and Chief Lord of Justice (Dharma-Rajah), man has the freedom to choose between right and wrong, belief and disbelief, Knowledge and Ignorance.

Therefore, God never punishes people for being ignorant. But He does punish them for choosing Ignorance (Ajnana) over Knowledge (Jnana). While innate ignorance is innocent and blameless, deliberate ignorance is a self-propagating negative energy that is responsible for much evil in the World. And those who give in to Evil suffer accordingly.

Knowledge – the Antidote to Suffering

Life is good. Humans, however, are not always good. They kill animals for food. They destroy forests, poison rivers and seas, pollute the air and deplete natural resources. They also harbour evil thoughts in their heart and they kill people who have done them no harm. Above all, humans are ungrateful. God has given Mankind so much. Yet man forgets his duty (Dharma) to God. Therefore, man must suffer until he remembers to make use of the knowledge God has given him and act according to Divine Command (Shiva-Shaasana).

God has given man reason that he might think rightly and find out what is true and what is false. Those who have neither sufficient power of reason nor Knowledge, must follow those who do. This is the Eternal Law of the Universe (Dharma).

Although **Dharma** is sometimes translated as "Religion", in reality, it is much more than that. It is the Power whereby the Universe is held together and that whereby God governs the World. It is also the expression of **Truth** whereby man adheres to what is right. It is the **Duty** or binding force whereby man is obliged to live his life in obedience to **Divine Law**. As such, Dharma is twofold: (1) the Duty to attain Unity with God which is the ultimate goal of all life towards which all creatures must strive through many lifetimes and (2) the Duty to act in Unity with Divine Law according to one's present personal circumstances. The latter form of Dharma is also known as **Sva-Dharma** or one's own personal duty.

The **Four Goals of Life** are: (1) **Dharma or Dutiful Life**, (2) **Artha or Material Prosperity**, (3) **Kama or Fulfilment of Love or Desires** and (4) **Nirvana or Salvation** which is Union with God and Liberation from all Suffering. Thus all life begins in Dharma and ends in Dharma.

In order to live a dutiful life, knowledge is required as to what constitutes duty. Therefore, man's first and foremost Duty is to acquire **Knowledge or Gnosis (Jnaana)**.

For this reason, it has been said: "From Yoga springs Wisdom; from lack of Yoga there is loss of Wisdom. Knowing this twofold path of progress and decline, a man should see to it that his Wisdom increases by following the Path of Yoga or Unity with Truth."

The Supreme Principle of Goodness

It is every man's duty to use his reason and find out what is Truth. By listening to the Glorious Wisdom of the Supreme Eternal Goodness imparted to the World by God through the Holy Ones (Rishis, Gurus and Sadhus) and the True Scriptures (Shiva Rahasya, Shiva Purana, Upanishads and Vedas), man acquires **Right Belief (Sat Darshana)**. On the basis of Right Belief he then acquires **Right Knowledge (Sat Jnana)** and on the basis of Right Knowledge he engages in **Right Conduct (Sat Achara)**.

Having become a Right Believer (Sat-Dharmin), a Right Knower (Sat-Jnanin) and a Right Doer (Sat-Acharin) man ever follows the **Right Path**. This will ensure that he always abides in **Unity with the Supreme Eternal Goodness (Shiva Samyoga)** and does His Will in all his works. Thus he attains happiness in this life and the next, and not in any other way. This is the Truth.

Happiness

Happiness is a feeling of peace, contentment and satisfaction that arises from the awareness of being whole, complete, powerful and free. It may be experienced when we accomplish something important, when we fulfill a strong desire or when we find the answer to an urgent question. Supreme Happiness (Ananda) is that which God Himself experiences on account of His Own eternal, independent and infinite Peace and Satisfaction. In human terms, the highest happiness is experienced when, by following the Spiritual Law of the Universe, man is able to perceive the Glory and Majesty of God, and share in His Blissful Existence.

Beauty

The Light of God is the Supreme Source of **Beauty**. It is the Light of Consciousness (Samvid-Prakasha) whereby God perceives His Own Infinite Majesty and Glory. As the Universe is the Creation of God, all natural things have the capacity to reflect the Glory of God to various degrees. Even man-made objects can reflect the Divine Order, Harmony and Unity of God. To the extent that they do so, they are characterised as "beautiful". In contrast, Ugliness is that which obstructs or distorts the experience of Beauty.

Beauty ultimately rests upon the perceiver's capacity to see the Glory of God in a particular object. Yet the object itself must be fashioned in such a way as to reflect or otherwise suggest God's Glory to the perceiver. Religious symbols and works of art, for example, are particularly suited for this purpose as are objects in the natural world such as flowers, animals, humans and other God-created things.

Moreover, if all things are a reflection of God's Infinite Glory, then man himself must be such a reflection. It follows that the Light and Beauty of God may be seen not only in external objects but also, and above all, within man. Indeed, as man is a creation of God, the human Soul is naturally beautiful.

Therefore, whenever man looks at an object he must remember that the object reflects a higher truth. Otherwise, he will come to believe that the objects of the World shine through their own light and not through the Light of God and he will be led astray.

Whether contemplating the beauty of outer things or the beauty within himself, man eventually discovers the beauty of his own Soul and, beyond that, the Supreme Beauty of God.

The Supreme Principle of Goodness

This discovery causes the human Soul to awaken to his own Divinity. This Awakening is known as **Divine Recognition (Ishvara-Pratyabhijna)** or the process whereby man realises his identity with the Supreme.

Love

Love is a feeling of happiness that arises from the experience of unity between two Souls. It can be experienced between parents and children, between friends and between lovers. However, Love can also be experienced by oneself. A Soul is naturally good, beautiful and happy. He has no reason to hate himself. The Soul, therefore, naturally abides in a state of Love for himself even when there is nothing else there to love. Indeed, love of others is only possible due to a Soul's conscious or subconscious recognition of the "other" as essentially identical with himself. Without this essential identity no true unity or love would be possible. Thus love for the "other" is ultimately nothing but an extension of love for oneself.

Ordinary love is of course a different thing altogether. The Spiritually untutored lover knows neither who he is nor who the loved one is. In such cases, "love" is simply a longing for the other's mind, body or possessions while the Soul, the true Self of the loved one, is completely ignored. For this reason, many relationships are doomed to end in tears. If humans only understood this, they would stop becoming involved in relationships that are meaningless and even harmful. Their relationships would no longer be a struggle between egos but a Blissfull Union of Souls who experience themselves as one.

The highest form of Love is that which God experiences for Himself and His Creation. God loves Himself because He is Pure Goodness, Wisdom, Happiness and Beauty. And He loves His Creation because He knows it to be essentially identical with Himself as His Own Conscious Expression or Projection. He could never hate His Creation because that would amount to hating Himself. God therefore always loves His Creation. By understanding this, man comes to understand God and live in Unity and Harmony with Him.

Unity

The natural state of the Soul is not only one of Goodness, Peace, Happiness, Beauty and Love but also one of **Unity**. On the highest level, Unity is God's Experience of Himself and of His Creation as an essential Oneness. In human terms, Unity is the Soul's experience of Oneness with himself, his mind, his body and whatever else he perceives or conceives as part of himself.

Unity is the foundation of all other experiences. No experience of Goodness, Peace, Happiness, Beauty, Love and the rest would be possible without unity. No perception would be possible without contact, or unity, between the perceiver and the perceived. No sentence would be possible without words being joined, or united, to each other. And no coherent thinking would be possible without unity of ideas.

Unity, therefore, is the foundation of all things. Just as waves arise from the unity of the sea and return back to it, so also all things arise from the Unity of Shiva's Infinite Ocean of Universal Intelligence, have their existence against its background and finally return to it in a perfect unity of Being.

Yoga – the Highest Expression of Unity

The Supreme Principle of Goodness

Yoga is Unity and Unity is Yoga. As the very word "Yoga" means "Unity", to practise Yoga means to practise Unity. The highest form of Yoga is **Unity with God**. If someone practises Unity, or lives in Unity, or realises Unity, or experiences Unity with God, then he practises, lives, realises or experiences Yoga even if he doesn't call it by that name.

Enlightenment, Self-Realisation, Nirvana, Salvation or Union with God (Shiva-Samyoga) is only possible in and through Yoga, because Yoga *is* Universal Unity. Because Yoga or God's Experience of Unity with Himself has always existed, Yoga must be, obviously, logically and necessarily, **God's Original Revelation to Mankind (Adi Dharma)**. Indeed, once our Soul has embraced the Eternal Truth of Yoga which is the Eternal Truth of Unity with the Supreme, and has allowed himself to be Embraced by It, what could other religions possibly offer, that the Soul has not already found in Yoga?

The Highest Truth is the Supreme Being's Awareness of Himself as a Beginningless, Eternal, Unique, Infinite, All-Embracing and All-Pervading Ocean of Light, Intelligence and Creative Energy, Whose Sensation is Boundless Freedom, Endless Joy, Unconditional Love and Unsurpassed Beauty. By practising Yoga or Unity with the Supreme, we participate in this Unique Experience and make it our own. By sharing in the Experience of the Supreme we become part of the Supreme. Thus we attain the Supreme Peace of Nirvana which is Eternal, Steadfast, Immutable, Incomparable, Ever Changeless and Sublime.

Yoga is the Supreme Being's Natural and Unique Awareness of Himself and His Own Creation, and by following the Path of Yoga we attune ourselves to, and thereby share in, this Supreme Experience. This is the Highest Truth. No other Truth is necessary, or required, or indeed possible. For this reason, the Shiva Mahapurana declares that **there is no higher Truth than Shiva**. Because Shiva or God is **the Supreme Eternal Goodness** Who eternally exists in **Perfect Unity (Yoga)** with Himself.

The fact is that God never created any religions. In the same way as the Sun constantly illumines the World, so also God Eternally, and Uninterruptedly, and Naturally, and Spontaneously, and Obviously, and Lovingly, and Graciously, and Compassionately, and Supremely Beautifully and Joyfully Radiates and Pervades His Entire Creation with His **Truth**.

Yet ignorant and confused men, under the influence of their ego or conditioned mind, misunderstand and misinterpret and distort and pervert God's Unique, Obvious, Supremely Wise, Beautiful, Ecstatic and Glorious **Truth of Unity and Love**, and create religions which they illogically, violently and criminally attempt to impose on others.

Therefore, we invite all true believers to free themselves from false religions, prejudices, misgivings and doubts and follow the Path of Yoga Dharma. For he who follows the Path of Yoga shall find the True Teaching, the True Path, the True Guidance and the True God. And he who has found That, has found True Peace.

**Shiva-Rajya:
The Spiritual Kingdom of Righteousness and Goodness**

The Supreme Principle of Goodness

The Holy Land of India (Bharata-Desha) is traditionally known as "Dharma-Bhumi" or "Land of Righteousness" on account of her being the land where Dharma, the **Supreme Eternal Law of Heaven**, was first revealed and established at the beginning of the World.

The Holy Kingdom of Goodness had Mount Kailasa as its centre and was ruled by Lord Shiva, the Supreme Principle of Goodness, Himself. After many millennia, however, Lord Shiva returned to His Secret Abode in Heaven and appointed the Gods to rule the World. Later still, the Gods also withdrew to their Celestial Abode and the World was left in the custody of Divine Kings. Finally, in the current World Age, the World came to be ruled by ordinary men. The result of this can be seen by all: poverty, violence, crime and disease; pollution, corruption, lawlessness and selfishness; greed, envy, anger, hatred and delusion. These are the evils that today control the World. God's Own Abode of Dharma has become the lair of Adharma. And things are getting worse.

What becomes clear is that, in order for the World to return to its original Golden Age of Goodness, it must once again be ruled by the Supreme Eternal Goodness, **Lord Shiva Mahadeva, Himself**. This is the inevitable lesson that history teaches us.

Earth must be ruled not by corrupt politicians, lawyers and businessmen but by upright men of Spirit who will prepare the way for the return of Divine Kings. Divine Kings will make way for the Gods. And the Gods will enthrone the Supreme Being, the God of Gods and Rightful Ruler of the World. Thus, once again, Goodness and Righteousness shall reign supreme.

The Kingdom of Righteousness and Goodness is the **World Yoga Community (Sangha)** which is the worldwide Congregation of true believers in, and followers of, Unity with the Supreme and its natural extension into all aspects of life whereby the human race can experience True Unity and the True Brotherhood of Man may be established on Earth under the Eternal Sovereignty of the Supreme.

This being so, it is the duty of all right-believing Souls to join forces in the Holy Struggle for the Victory of Goodness over Evil, of Righteousness over Unrighteousness, of Right Belief over Unbelief and of Truth over Untruth. Mankind must unite under the banner of the Lord of Unity and Goodness and follow His Supreme Command that the Kingdom of Shiva may rise and shine again like a great beacon of light that dispels all darkness and illumines the World for all times.
